

Article VIII: Council Responsibilities

Section 1 *Mandatory Advisory Capacity Responsibilities by Statute*

School Governance Councils serve in an *advisory* capacity and shall assist the school administration in the areas listed below:

- a. Analyze school achievement data and school needs as they relate to the school's improvement plan;
- b. Review the fiscal objectives of the school's draft budget and advise the Principal before the budget is submitted to the Superintendent;
- c. Participate in the hiring process of the school Principal or other administrators of the school by being available to being a part of the search and/or interview process devised by the Superintendent of Schools;
- d. Assist the Principal in making programmatic and operational changes to improve the school's achievement;
- e. Develop and approve a written school parent involvement policy that outlines the role of parents and guardians (Note: Schools that receive federal Title 1 funds are required to have a parent involvement policy developed jointly with, approved by, and distributed to parents. A school's Title 1 parent involvement policy can serve the purpose of the policy required under this section.); and
- f. Work with school administrators in developing and approving a school compact for parents, legal guardians, and students that outlines the school's goals and academic focus identifying ways that parents and school personnel can build a partnership to improve student learning. (Note: Schools that receive federal Title 1 funds are required to have a school-parent compact, developed with parents. A school's Title 1 compact can serve the purpose of the compact required under this section.)

Section 2 *Optional Additional Responsibilities*

In addition to its statutory required responsibilities, the Council may:

- a. Assist in developing and reviewing the school improvement plan and advise the Principal before the report is submitted to the Superintendent of Schools;
- b. Work with the Principal to develop, conduct, and report the results of an annual survey of parents, guardians, and teachers on issues related to the school climate and conditions; and
- c. Provide advice to the Principal on any other major policy matters affecting the school, except on matters relating to collective bargaining agreements between the teachers and the Board of Education.

Section 3 *Limitations Placed on the Advisory Function*

In addition to School Governance Councils' responsibilities, it is also important to recognize the limits of its advisory function. The duties of School Governance Councils do not entail activities including, but not limited to:

- a. Managing the school;
- b. Supervising staff;
- c. Entering into contracts or purchase agreements;
- d. Discussing individual issues between teachers and students and/or parents;
- e. Determining student eligibility for school admission; or
- f. Determining class allocations or student assignments.

Apart from their function as part of the Council, members have no individual authority. Individually, voting members of the Council may not commit the school to any policy, act, practice or expenditure. No individual member of the Council, by virtue of holding office, shall exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the school, or as an individual command the services of any school employee.

All powers of the School Governance Council lie in its action as a committee of the whole. Individual Council members exercise their advisory authority/responsibilities only as they vote to take action at a legal meeting of the Council.

Section 4 *Reconstitution of School*

1. After being in place for three years, the Council may vote to recommend that a school be reconstituted using one of the following models for reconstitution:

- a. Turnaround
- b. Restart

- c. Transformation
- d. CommPact School
- e. Innovation School
- f. Any other model developed under federal law

2. However, the Council cannot vote to reconstitute a school if it was already reconstituted for another purpose, such as (1) the school was already reconstituted as a result of receiving a federal school improvement grant that was contingent on reconstitution; or (2) a reconstitution of the school was initiated by another source, such as the State Board of Education or the local or regional Board of Education.

3. The Board of Education shall within ten (10) days of receiving a recommendation from the Council for reconstitution hold a public hearing to discuss the vote of the Council. At the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education or ten days after the public hearing, whichever is later, the Board shall conduct a vote to accept the model recommended by the Council, select an alternate model or maintain the current school status. *(Other time lines are established in the statute regarding an alternative model chosen by the Board of Education and required discussions and the role of the Commissioner of Education.)*

Article IX: Meetings of the Council

Section 1 Meetings

The Council shall prescribe the time, place and dates of its regular meetings. The schedule of the regular meetings shall be available to the general public and shall be posted in a manner available to the public at the school which should in addition include posting on the school web site.) The annual schedule of regular meetings shall be established at the Council's meeting held in November.

All required notices of meetings shall be adhered to for all called meetings.

The meetings of the Council are subject to the provisions of the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act, Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-200 et. seq.

Section 2 Place of Meetings

The Council shall hold its regular meetings in the Media Center at Washington Elementary School, unless changed by the Council.

Training meetings provided by the Board of Education may be held at any location designated by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

All meetings of the Council shall be open to the public unless specifically exempt under the Freedom of Information Act.

Section 3 Notice of Meetings

Written public notice shall be given of all meetings at least 72 hours (3 days) in advance of the meeting. Changes in the established date, time or location shall be given special notice. All meetings shall be publicized in the following venues: school office bulletin board, and school web site. All required notices shall be delivered to Council and committee members no less than 72 hours, and no more than 7 days in advance of the meeting, personally or by mail (or by e-mail).

Section 4 Quorum

A majority of the voting members of the Council shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business. The act of a majority of the members present shall be the act of Council, provided a quorum is in attendance, and no decision may otherwise be attributed to the Council.

Section 5 Agendas

The Council shall establish procedures by which Council parents, Council community members and Council teachers can have items placed on the agendas of Council meetings. These procedures shall not present any unreasonable hindrances for Council parents, Council community members or Council teachers who wish to place items on the agendas.

Section 6 Conduct of Meetings

Meetings of the Council shall be conducted in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* in all cases to which they are applicable as long as they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws or state law, or an adaptation thereof approved by the Council.

Section 7 Meetings Open to the Public/Public Participation

All meetings of the Council, and of committees established by Council, shall be open to the public. Notice of such meetings shall be provided in accordance with Section 3 of this article.

Comments by parents/guardians, community members or staff not on the Council will be permitted concerning any subject that lies within the jurisdiction of the Council shall be as follows:

1. Three (3) minutes may be allotted to each speaker and a maximum of twenty minutes to each subject matter.
2. The Chairperson shall not permit actions that disrupt or interrupt the orderly conduct of the Council meeting.
3. The Council, by a majority vote, decides to cancel or extend the 20 minutes allotted per item of the agenda.
4. No speaker making an oral presentation shall include charges or complaints of a personal nature against any individual Council member or individual employee of the Board of Education, whether named or not.

Section 8 Voting Rights

Each voting member of the Council is entitled to one vote and may cast that vote on any matter submitted to a vote of the Council. Absentee ballots shall not be permitted.

Section 9 Minutes/Documents

The minutes of each Council meeting shall be recorded by the Secretary and shall include the names of the members present, a description of each motion or other proposal made, and a record of all votes. Each Council member shall receive a copy of the Minutes with the agenda for the next regular meeting, at which the Minutes shall be approved.

Minutes shall be made available to the public at the School office. A draft version of the Minutes shall be available at the school office within seven days after each meeting, excluding any Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday. All votes taken at any meeting of the Council must be recorded and made available for public inspection within 48 hours of the meeting. The Minutes of any emergency special meeting shall specify the nature of the emergency and shall be available within 72 hours of the meeting. All documents created or maintained by the Council are subject to the provisions of the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act.

Article X: Amendments

An amendment of these bylaws may be made at any regular meeting of the School Governance Council by a vote of two-thirds of the members present. Written notice of the proposed amendment must be submitted to Council members at least one (1) week in advance of the meeting which the amendment is to be considered for adoption.

Article XI: Immunity

The Council shall have the same immunity as the Board of Education in all matters directly related to the function of the Council.

Article XII: Conflict of Interest

No member of the Council or officer shall have an interest in any contract with the school district or affiliated with the school district unless such interest is specifically permitted by statute. *Interest* shall mean pecuniary or material benefit accruing to a Board of Education member, officer or employee or their relatives resulting from a contractual relationship with the school system.

Article XIII: Training

The statute (P.A. 10-111, Section 21(g)) requires the Board of Education to provide appropriate training and instruction to members of the Council to aid them in the execution of their duties, as described in these bylaws. (An option open to boards of education is the utilization of Title I parent involvement funding, where applicable, to support the work of the Council.)

The Board of Education and the School Principal shall assist each new Council member to become familiar with and to understand the Council's functions, bylaws, and procedures.

The Council shall be responsible for the training of individuals elected to a subsequent Council after training has been provided by

the Manchester board of Education.

Article XIV: Relationship to Parent Organization

The Council shall establish procedures by which there shall be close and continual communication with the school's parent organization (PTA). This procedure shall be developed in cooperation with the parent organization.

Article XV: Termination of Council

Only Boards of Education with a low achieving school due to failing to make adequate yearly progress in mathematics and reading at the whole school level during the 2009 – 2010 school year or 2011- 2012 school year are required to have a Council. Current law (as of August 31, 2013) does not contain any provision for ceasing the operation of a Council.